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EXAMINER				
HODGE, ROBERT W				
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03/01/2010		ELECTRONIC		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

PATDOCTC@fr.com

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/664,405

Applicant(s)

DRAKE ET AL.

Examiner

ROBERT HODGE

Art Unit

1795

Period for Reply -- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 November 2009.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 and 14-22 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 2-7 and 18-22 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,8-12 and 14-17 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)



- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB06)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments, see amendments and arguments, filed 11/4/09, with respect to the rejection of claims 9-11 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph have been fully considered and are persuasive. The rejection of claims 9-11 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph has been withdrawn.

Applicant's arguments filed 11/4/09 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicants state that Yonetsu does not disclose or even suggest that the pathway 3 includes a heat producing element. As is quite clear starting in column 4, line 50 Yonetsu clearly discloses that the pathway 3 is filled with a porous material through which the liquid fuel permeates (also called a fine tube that performs capillary function as admitted to by Applicants) and the porous material is in fluid communication and fluidly connected to the liquid fuel holding material called a receiver 5, where the fuel is vaporized before entering the unit cell. The instant specification does not provide a new definition for the word "egress" and therefore the plain meaning of the word given its broadest most reasonable interpretation is used. According to Dictionary.com:

e·gress  (ě'grěs') 
n.

1. The act of coming or going out; emergence.
2. The right to leave or go out: *denied the refugees egress.*
3. A path or opening for going out; an exit.
4. *Astronomy* The emergence of a celestial body from eclipse or occultation.

Therefore the entire path that the fuel flows through before it is vaporized at the vaporization plate "a" is considered the "egress port" and since the receiver 5 is completely disposed on the vaporization plate "a" the vaporization plate "a" is disposed in the path of the fuel being supplied and is therefore "disposed in the fuel egress port" as recited in instant claim 1.

Applicants state that none of the secondary references make up for the supposed deficiencies of Yonetsu, however as clarified above Yonetsu does not contain the supposed deficiencies and the grounds of rejection will be maintained.

With regards to the Obviousness Type Double Patenting (ODP) rejections, as long as one set of claims fully encompasses the scope of another set of claims then an ODP rejection is proper. In this case as was stated in the grounds of rejection "the claims of copending Application No. 10/664,818 fully encompass the scope of the instant claims", i.e. the claims of the copending application are broader than the instant claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102



The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Claims 1, 8 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a/e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,506,513 hereinafter Yonetsu.

As seen in the figures, Yonetsu teaches a fuel cartridge, that is prismatic in shape, having a housing 1, a fuel egress port 3 that contains a heat producing element

"a" (i.e. vaporizing plate, Figure 2), which is also in the interior of the cartridge (figures 13-14B) and spaces a vapor portion of the cartridge from a liquid reservoir of the cartridge, a bladder 16 (figure 7B) that holds a liquid fuel 7 such as methanol (column 5, lines 4-8) that is supplied to a direct methanol fuel cell 2 (column 2, line 34 – column 3, line 19, column 4, line 26 – column 5, line 35 and column 7, line 47 – column 7 line 62).

Furthermore in column 4, line 50 Yonetsu clearly discloses that the pathway 3 is filled with a porous material through which the liquid fuel permeates (also called a fine tube that performs capillary function as admitted to by Applicants in the Remarks field 11/4/09) and the porous material is in fluid communication and fluidly connected to the liquid fuel holding material called a receiver 5, where the fuel is vaporized before entering the unit cell. The instant specification does not provide a new definition for the word "egress" and therefore the plain meaning of the word given its broadest most reasonable interpretation is used. According to Dictionary.com:

e·gress  (ē'grĕs') 
n.

5. The act of coming or going out; emergence.
6. The right to leave or go out: *denied the refugees egress.*
7. A path or opening for going out; an exit.
8. *Astronomy* The emergence of a celestial body from eclipse or occultation.

Therefore the entire path that the fuel flows through before it is vaporized at the vaporization plate "a" is considered the "egress port" and since the receiver 5 is completely disposed on the vaporization plate "a" the vaporization plate "a" is disposed

in the path of the fuel being supplied and is therefore "disposed in the fuel egress port" as recited in instant claim 1.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Claims 9 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yonetsu as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of U.S. Pre-Grant Publication No. 2004/0202904 hereinafter Gore.

Yonetsu does not teach that the heat producing element is a wire.

As seen in figures 2 and 2A-2C, Gore teaches a fuel cartridge 206 having a housing 230, a heat producing element (i.e. wire) 208, disposed in the cartridge and in thermal communication with the cartridge (paragraphs [0039]-[0051]).

At the time of the invention it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to use a wire for the heat-producing element in the fuel cartridge of Yonetsu as taught by Gore in order to vaporize the methanol in the cartridge before entering the anode of the direct methanol fuel cell of Yonetsu especially during startup when the fuel cell is cold, so that the rate of reaction can be accelerated in the direct methanol fuel cell of Yonetsu thus increasing the overall efficiency of the cartridge and fuel cell system of Yonetsu. If a technique has been used to improve one device (using a wire for the heat-producing element in a fuel cartridge), and a person of ordinary skill in the art would recognize that it would improve similar devices in the same way

(vaporizing the methanol in the cartridge before entering the anode of the direct methanol fuel cell especially during startup when the fuel cell is cold so that the rate of reaction can be accelerated in the direct methanol fuel cell thus increasing the overall efficiency of the cartridge and fuel cell system), using the technique is obvious unless its actual application is beyond his or her skill. See MPEP 2141 (III) Rationale C, KSR v. Teleflex (Supreme Court 2007).

Claims 12, 14, 16 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yonetsu.

Yonetsu as discussed above is incorporated herein. Yonetsu further teaches in figure 7A a piston 30 (i.e. fuel sealing part) urged against the fuel via spring 14 (column 7, lines 48-62).

Yonetsu does not teach the piston and the bladder in the same embodiment.

At the time of the invention it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to combine the embodiments of figures 7A and 7B of Yonetsu in order to provide a fuel cartridge with multiple solutions for properly containing the methanol fuel as well as providing sufficient means to push out the fuel through the fuel outlet port thereby providing the necessary fuel to the fuel cell in order for the fuel cell to operate. The above combination such as a piston urged against a bladder, according to known methods by Yonetsu yields the predictable result of providing a sufficient means to push out the fuel through the fuel outlet port thereby providing the necessary fuel to the fuel cell in order for the fuel cell to operate. See MPEP 2141 (III) Rationale A, KSR v.

Teleflex (Supreme Court 2007). See also *Boston Scientific Inc. v. Cordis Corp.* (Fed. Cir. 2009) 89 USPQ2d 1704.

Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yonetsu as applied to claim 12 above, and further in view of Gore.

Yonetsu does not teach a battery to power the heat-producing element.

Gore as discussed above is incorporated herein. Gore further teaches powering the heat-producing element with a battery (paragraph [0031]).

At the time of the invention it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to use a battery to power the heat-producing element in the fuel cartridge of Yonetsu as taught by Gore in order to provide a system that can power the heat-producing element on demand when a sufficient electric load is not available from the fuel cell such as at startup in order to vaporize the methanol in the cartridge before entering the anode of the direct methanol fuel cell of Yonetsu especially during startup when the fuel cell is cold, so that the rate of reaction can be accelerated in the direct methanol fuel cell of Yonetsu thus increasing the overall efficiency of the cartridge and fuel cell system of Yonetsu. If a technique has been used to improve one device (using a wire for the heat-producing element in a fuel cartridge), and a person of ordinary skill in the art would recognize that it would improve similar devices in the same way (providing a system that can power the heat-producing element on demand when a sufficient electric load is not available from the fuel cell such as at startup in order to vaporize the methanol in the cartridge before entering the anode of the direct methanol fuel cell especially during startup when the fuel cell is cold so that the rate of reaction

can be accelerated in the direct methanol fuel cell thus increasing the overall efficiency of the cartridge and fuel cell system), using the technique is obvious unless its actual application is beyond his or her skill. See MPEP 2141 (III) Rationale C, *KSR v. Teleflex* (Supreme Court 2007).

Double Patenting

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 1, 8, 12 and 17 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 11 and 12 of copending Application No. 10/664,818. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the claims of copending Application No. 10/664,818 fully encompass the scope of instant claims the only

difference is the instant claims provide further structure which has been found in the prior art.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to **ROBERT HODGE** whose telephone number is (571)272-2097. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00am - 4:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Basia Ridley can be reached on (571) 272-1453. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Robert Hodge/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 1795